

OBITUARY

EDWARD P. WILTSHIRE 1910–2004



Ted Wiltshire has passed away at the ripe old age of 94—very possibly unknown to most younger readers of this journal. He was one of England's most prominent 'amateur' entomologists, mostly dealing with butterflies and moths from further afield than Europe. He was editor of the *British Journal of Entomology and Natural History* from 1976 to 1980.

A typical middle class education culminated with graduation in classics from Jesus College, Cambridge. Again—typically—his education had involved the collection and study of butterflies and moths, its effects rather more enduring than usual.

In 1932 he joined the Consular Service and held a large number of increasingly senior postings in Beirut, Mosul, Baghdad, Tabriz, Ahwaz, Teheran, Kermanshah, Cairo, Bahrain, Buenos Aires, and Geneva. In 1967 he was posted to London with a brief detour to le Havre.

During this time he travelled much—what did a British consul in Kermanshah in the 1950s actually have to do apart from some mild gathering of intelligence?—and collected butterflies and moths along the way. He published the most detailed accounts yet of the Lepidoptera of Lebanon, Iraq, Egypt and Bahrain which remain primary sources to any study of these faunae. He also wrote numerous smaller papers, some of a technical nature but many of general information.

During the 1970s he fortuitously became associated with the fauna of Saudi Arabia project and published many papers, culminating in an up-to-date list of all the moths of the Arabian Peninsula. He ceded the butterflies to me. I am not sure how many new moths were described as part of the Arabian project, but it might well exceed 100—in addition to the clarification of the status of many others.

I was first in touch with Ted in 1974 when living in Lebanon. I was preparing a book on the butterflies of that country and had just—with considerable pride—published a paper demonstrating that *Allancastria cerisyi* (Godart) in Lebanon



Wiltshire on consular duty. His *Lepidoptera of Iraq* was first published in 1944.

consisted of two distinct species. A letter arrived from Ted congratulating me on solving a matter about which he had had suspicions so vague that he never committed them to paper. I was dumbfounded. With the short time horizons of youth and since the Lebanon butterfly paper was published seven years before my birth, I had assumed he was long-since dead. Well, he was not. We had many long and interesting discussions about the fauna of the Middle East and Arabia. We last met in 2000 at the Royal Entomological Society in London. He insisted that we walk down to the closest pub for a beer and a more informal chat than could be had in those august halls.

Ted Wiltshire described his life in a series of autobiographic reminiscences cited below. They show the amazing changes between the world of the 1940s and the end of the 20th century.

TORBEN B. LARSEN

Edward Wiltshire was a true gentleman and one of the best amateur lepidopterists of the 20th century; his production was exceptional. He was a wonderful nature observer and he liked to share his knowledge; he was for me an example, a guide, a master, and I had the high honour to be his friend and I will not forget him. A new *Cucullia* species (Noctuidae), endemic to South-West Arabia, will be dedicated to him soon, and probably an African *Acontia* as well, as he had a special interest in the two genera.

ALBERT LEGRAIN

SELECTED AUTOBIOGRAPHY

1991. *Entomologist's Record and Journal of Variation* **103**: 63–68, 119–124, 175–180, 251–256, 307–312.
 1992. *Entomologist's Record and Journal of Variation* **104**: 33–38, 71–74, 149–154, 203–206.